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TOT: 041303Z MAY 85

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] FILE SUMMARY RICARDO SOL MEZA

1. FOLLOWING IS [REDACTED] TRACE RESPONSE,
[REDACTED] DATED 23 DECEMBER 1983, ON RICARDO ((SOL))
MEZA [REDACTED].

"RICARDO SOL MEZA WAS BORN 24 JUNE 1946 IN SAN SALVADOR. SOL MEZA WAS AT ONE TIME THE OWNER OF THE SHERATON HOTEL DISCO AND ON THE SHERATON BOARD OF DIRECTORS. SOL MEZA [REDACTED] CONSISTS MAINLY OF [REDACTED] TRAFFIC DEALING WITH HIS SUSPECTED INVOLVEMENT IN THE MURDERS OF AIFLD OFFICIALS MIKE HAMMER AND MARK PEARLMAN. IN JUNE 1983 [REDACTED] SAN SALVADOR REPORTED THAT RICARDO AND BROTHER ENRIQUE WENT TO [REDACTED] TO HAVE U.S. VISA VALIDATED. [REDACTED] MESSAGE STATED THAT SINCE HIS IMPLICATION IN THE ABOVE MURDERS HE HAD BEEN ABSOLVED OF ANY WRONG DOING BY SALVADORAN COURTS AND "IT NOW APPEARS THAT HE WAS AN INNOCENT BYSTANDER."

[REDACTED] ON 30
MAY 1981 [REDACTED] source
REPORTED THAT THEN NATIONAL GUARD MAJOR MARIO DENIS ((MORAN)) DIRECTED A "DEATH SQUAD" PAYROLLED BY SALVADORAN BUSINESSMAN RICARDO SOL MESA, AND THAT SOL MESA AND MORAN USED THIS DEATH SQUAD TO KILL RODOLFO ((VIERA)), FORMER PRESIDENT OF SALVADORAN INSTITUTE OF AGRARIAN TRANSFORMATION (ISTA) AT THE SHERATON HOTEL ON 4 JANUARY 1981. [REDACTED] COMMENTED THAT HAMMER AND PEARLMAN APPARENTLY WERE NOT TARGETS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT.

"A. VIERA WAS A LONGSTANDING TARGET OF THE SOL MESA AND MORAN GROUP, AND THEY TOOK ADVANTAGE OF VIERA'S LENGTHY PRESENCE IN THE SHERATON HOTEL FOR DINNER ON 4 JANUARY 1981 TO ASSASSINATE HIM. THE ASSASSINATION WAS NOT PREPLANNED; THE DECISION TO MURDER VIERA WAS MADE ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT.

"B. THE DEATH SQUAD DESCRIBED ABOVE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MAJORITY OF BANK BOMBINGS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN RECENT MONTHS IN THE CAPITAL CITY OF SAN SALVADOR, AS WELL AS FOR THE ASSASSINATIONS OF MANY INDIVIDUALS THOUGHT TO SUPPORT LEFTIST CAUSES. THE PAYROLL OF THE DEATH SQUAD IS ESTIMATED AT 20,000 COLONES MONTHLY (U.S. \$8,000) WITH MEMBERS NORMALLY PAID 100 COLONES DAILY (U.S. \$40.00) DURING THE PERIODS THEY ARE ASSIGNED TO WORK FOR THE SQUAD. [REDACTED] COMMENT: ALTHOUGH NOT DIRECTLY STATED IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE MAJORITY IF NOT ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOL MESA AND MORAN DEATH SQUAD ARE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD.)

"C. THE SOL MESA AND MORAN DEATH SQUAD OPERATES ON ITS OWN BUT IT IS THOUGHT TO HAVE CONNECTIONS THROUGH FORMER ARMY CAPTAIN EDUARDO ALFONSO AVILA WITH ANOTHER RIGHTIST GROUP WHICH IS INVOLVED IN SIMILAR ACTIVITIES."

2. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (NOT REPORTED IN ABOVE [REDACTED])

[REDACTED] FOLLOWS:

A. ON 22 OCTOBER 1981, THE SALVADORAN SUPREME COURT ISSUED AN ORDER THAT SOL MEZA BE RELEASED FROM PRISON. THE ORDER READ IN PART THAT THERE EXISTED NO LEGAL BASIS FOR SOL MEZA'S DETENTION. AFTER HIS RELEASE FROM PRISON, SOL MEZA DEPARTED EL SALVADOR. HE WAS REPORTEDLY SEEN IN GUATEMALA, SPAIN, COSTA RICA AND MEXICO.

B. IN JUNE 1983, [REDACTED] ADVISED THAT SOL MEZA WOULD BE REQUESTING A VISA. [REDACTED] FURTHER STATED THAT [REDACTED] FULLY INTENDED TO INFORM [REDACTED] OF THEIR EMBASSY; STATE INTENTION TO ISSUE SOL MEZA VISA, SINCE CHARGES NO LONGER EXISTED AGAINST HIM IN EL SALVADOR. IN JANUARY 1985, SOL MEZA AGAIN REQUESTED ISSUANCE OF VISA FOR VACATION IN THE MIAMI AREA. THERE WAS NO OBJECTION TO ISSUANCE OF VISA. SUGGESTED LENGTH OF VISA WOULD BE FOR A LIMITED PERIOD OF 30 DAYS.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]